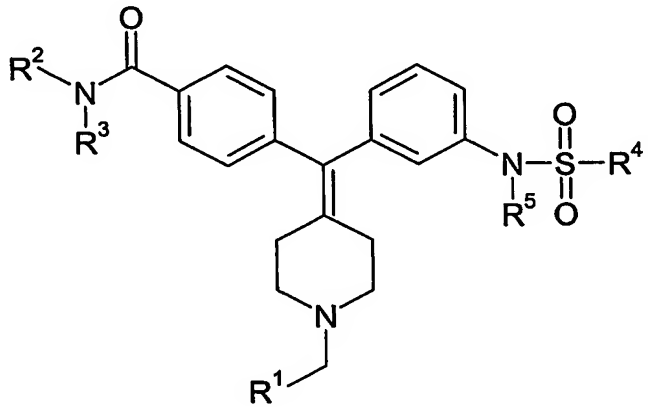
What is claimed is :

1. A compound of formula I, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, diastereomers, enantiomers, or mixtures thereof:



I

wherein

R^1 is selected from C_{6-10}aryl and C_{2-6}heteroaryl, wherein said C_{6-10}aryl and C_{2-6}heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; and

R^2, R^3, R^4 and R^5 are, independently, selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, wherein said C_{1-6}alkyl and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl.

2. A compound according to claim 1,

wherein R^1 is selected from phenyl; pyridyl; thienyl; furyl; imidazolyl; triazolyl; pyrrolyl; thiazolyl; and N-oxido-pyridyl, wherein R^1 is optionally

substituted with one or more groups selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, halogenated C_{1-6}alkyl, -NO_2, -CF_3, C_{1-6} alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo;

R^2, R^3, and R^4 are, independently, C_{1-3}alkyl or halogenated C_{1-3}alkyl;

R^5 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, wherein said C_{1-6}alkyl and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, halogenated C_{1-6}alkyl, -NO_2, -CF_3, C_{1-6} alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo.

3. A compound according to claim 1,

wherein R^1 is selected from phenyl; pyridyl; thienyl; furyl; imidazolyl; pyrrolyl; and thiazolyl, wherein R^1 is optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, halogenated C_{1-6}alkyl, -NO_2, -CF_3, C_{1-6} alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo;

R^2, R^3, and R^4 are, independently, C_{1-3}alkyl or halogenated C_{1-3}alkyl; and

R^5 is hydrogen.

4. A compound according to claim 1,

wherein R^1 is selected from phenyl, pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, imidazolyl, pyrrolyl, and thiazolyl;

R^2 and R^3 are ethyl;

R^4 is C_{1-3}alkyl; and

R^5 is hydrogen.

5. A compound according to claim 1, wherein the compound is selected from:

N,N-diethyl-4-{{3-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl}[1-(thien-2-ylmethyl)piperidin-4-ylidene]methyl}benzamide;

N,N-diethyl-4-[[1-(2-furanylmethyl)-4-piperidinylidene][3-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl]methyl]-benzamide;

N,N-diethyl-4-[[1-(phenylmethyl)-4-piperidinylidene][3-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl]methyl]-benzamide;

N,N-diethyl-4-[[3-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl][1-(3-pyridinylmethyl)-4-piperidinylidene]methyl]-benzamide;

N,N-diethyl-4-[[3-[(methylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl][1-(3-thiazolyl-methyl)-4-piperidinylidene]methyl]-benzamide;
and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

6. A compound according to any one of claims 1-5 for use as a medicament.

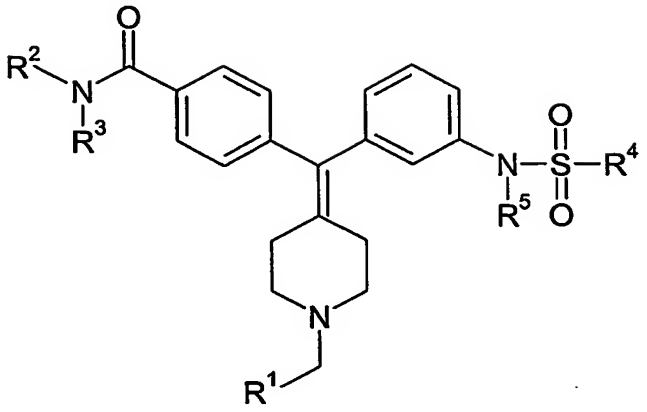
7. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5 in the manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain, anxiety or functional gastrointestinal disorders.

8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one of claims 1-5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

9. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

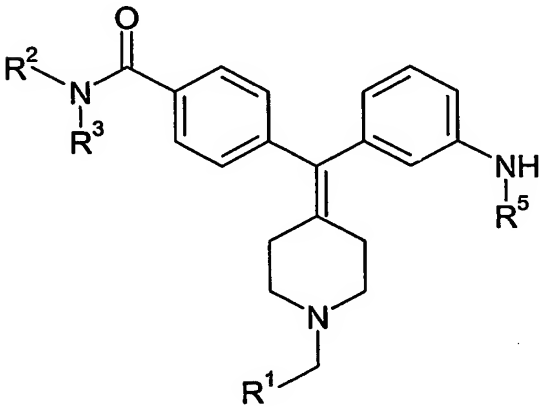
10. A method for the therapy of functional gastrointestinal disorders in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

11. A process for preparing a compound of formula I, comprising:



I

reacting a compound of formula II with X-S(=O)$_2$-R^4 or R^{4}S(=O)$_2$-O-S(=O)$_2$R^4.



II

wherein

X is selected from Cl, Br and I;

R^1 is selected from C_{6-10}aryl and C_{2-6}heteroaryl, wherein said C_{6-10}aryl and C_{2-6}heteroaryl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, -NO$_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF$_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH$_2$, -SH, -NHR, -NR$_2$, -SR, -SO$_3$H, -SO$_2$R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR$_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; and

R^2, R^3, R^4 and R^5 are, independently, selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, wherein said C_{1-6}alkyl and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, -NO$_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -CF$_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, -NH$_2$, -SH, -NHR, -NR$_2$, -SR, -SO$_3$H, -SO$_2$R, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -

C(=O)OR, -C(=O)NR_2, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl.